

# Obituaries

## Zhong Wei Chen

Innovative microsurgeon who performed the world's first reported hand replant

Zhong Wei Chen, an internationally famous microsurgeon, published the world's first hand reattachment in 1963; 41 years later the patient is still alive and working, his hand functioning well.

Chen's doctor father was the president of a hospital and his mother a pharmacist. In 1948 he entered the French-funded Shanghai Second Medical College, where he did 10 times more cadaver dissections than the other students. His interest in surgery grew from this. He started postgraduate training in 1954 under Professor Yan Qing Ye, one of the founders of modern Chinese orthopaedics, at Shanghai Lister Hospital. On completion of his training he moved to the Shanghai Sixth People's Hospital, a national trauma centre, where he rapidly shone. Seven years after qualifying he performed the replantation that made him famous, publishing it in the *Chinese Medical Journal* (1963;82:632). An American surgeon, Ronald Malt, had successfully replanted a child's amputated hand several months earlier but did not publish the case report until the child achieved functional recovery (*Journal of the American Medical Association* 1964;198:716).

In 1966 Chen successfully replanted an amputated finger, and performed an arm replantation after segmental resection, thus allowing some functional restoration after tumour removal. In 1975 he successfully used a pectoral major muscle flap to reconstruct forearm muscles, and in 1977 he was the first to treat tibial pseudo-arthritis with a vascularised fibula flap. In 1980 he was one of the first to recreate a missing thumb with a second toe. A year later he began vascularised nerve grafting: in two patients with substantial missing sections of the radial motor nerve he transplanted sections of sensory nerve, producing considerable functional recovery. In 1982 he developed pedicled iliac crest transfer for treating femoral head aseptic necrosis in children. By 1983 his group had carried out 1100 limb and digit replants.

He has been a visiting professor in 40 countries and has won many awards including presidency of the International Society for Reconstructive Microsurgery and the Chinese Qiu Shen Award for the top 10 Chinese scientists in history. Last year the



*Journal of Long-Term Effects of Medical Implants* named Dr Chen outstanding scientist of 2003 for starting the modern era of replantation surgery and for the microsurgical techniques he developed.

His microsurgery research laboratory studied methods of improving the patency of small vessels, invention of the "sleeve" microanastomosis for vessels less than 1 mm diameter, cold storage of the amputated extremity, effects of hyperbaric oxygen on ischaemic replants, motor nerve-plate regeneration after nerve repair, vascularised nerve grafting, bridging nerve defects with vascularised grafting, effects of Schwann cells on nerve regeneration, and improving nerve regrowth with Chinese herbs and nerve growth factors, and a search for animal models of clinical problems. He was the author of 92 papers in Chinese and 33 in English, and wrote 11 books.

His daughter, plastic surgeon Dr Lilly Chen of New York, said that his relationship with the Chinese regime was good, apart from the general opprobrium to which all intellectuals were subjected. However, David Evans, a hand surgeon from Windsor, told

the *BMJ* that he felt this was not always so and that Dr Chen was sometimes prevented from visiting the West, where he was in great demand. He visited England in the early 1980s. When Mr Evans organised a visit of 18 UK orthopaedic surgeons to China they visited Chen and watched him do a toe-to-hand transplant in a very basic operating room, lit, it seemed, with a car headlight. Chen surreptitiously invited the group to his tiny flat; by the next day the authorities had heard about this, and questioned the party about any exchange of gifts.

Tall and athletic, Chen was a national javelin champion when young and remained a keen tennis player, and fit and athletic, all his life. Productive to the last, he never retired from research and teaching.

When he locked himself out of his seventh floor flat he tried to climb in from a balcony but the window was locked and, unable to turn around, he fell to his death.

He leaves a wife, Professor Hui Zhu Yin, an ear nose and throat specialist; and a son and daughter, who live in New York. [CAROLINE RICHMOND]

*Zhong Wei Chen, resident surgeon, head of orthopaedics, and then deputy director Shanghai Sixth People's Hospital; chairman, department of surgery Zhong Shan Hospital, Shanghai, China (b Ningbo, Zhejiang province, China, 1929; q Shanghai Second Medical University 1954), died on 23 March 2004 after falling from his apartment block.*

### Advice

*We will be pleased to receive obituary notices of around 250 words. Pressure on space means that in most cases we will be able to publish only about 100 words in the printed journal, but we can run a fuller version on our website. We will take responsibility for shortening. We do not send proofs. Good quality, original photographs are welcome. Please give a contact telephone number and, where possible, supply the obituary on a disk or by email to [obituaries@bmj.com](mailto:obituaries@bmj.com)*

*We need to know the year of birth and exact date of death of the deceased, and we prefer obituaries to state the cause of death. Please spell out abbreviations.*

## Tom Anderson



CAMBRIDGE EVENING NEWS

*Former general practitioner Cambridge (b 1920; q Cambridge/King's College Hospital, London, 1944; MD, FRCGP), d 13 March 2003.*

With wry amusement Tom Anderson made a belated claim to the medals to which he was entitled: the Home Guard medal (obtained following service as a medical student at King's College Hospital), the Palestine Star (as a doctor with the Royal Army Medical Corps 1945-7), and the Falklands medal (as a doctor with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary 1982-5)—all dropped through the letterbox on the same day. Tom spent the intervening years as a general practitioner in Cambridge and clinical assistant in the chest clinic at Addenbrooke's Hospital. He took medicine (but not himself) seriously. He leaves a wife, Margaret; two daughters; and three sons. [JAMES ANDERSON]

## Charles Peter Beynon Brook



*Former consultant in old age psychiatry Cambridge (b Bromley 1928; q Guy's Hospital, London, 1952; MD, FRCPSych), d 18 December 2003.*

Peter Brook was the first old age psychiatrist in Cambridge. He inherited numerous rambling wards at the old Fulbourn Hospital and founded the present thriving and much grown service. This included the development of integrated multidisciplinary community resource teams, long before the current vogue for interagency working. Always a supporter of research, he was instrumental in establishing the Hughes Hall project for later life, an epidemiological study of nearly 3000 over 75s in Cambridge. Although he developed myeloma soon after his retirement, he remained active as an organiser of the local branch of the University of the Third Age and with work on naval

history. He leaves a wife, Joy; two children; and two grandsons. [TOM DENING]

## Alexander Campbell Buchan

*Consultant plastic surgeon Bangour General Hospital, Edinburgh, 1941-79 (b 1915; q Edinburgh 1940; FRCS Ed, FDS), d 18 November 2003.*

Campbell was appointed surgeon to the newly established plastic and maxillofacial surgical unit at Bangour General Hospital in 1941. After the inception of the NHS he was appointed consultant plastic surgeon to the South Eastern Regional Hospital Board. Later he became involved in surgery of the hand, spending some months in Milwaukee, United States, to further his experience. This, with treatment of head and neck malignancy, became his main interests. He was elected president of the British Association of Plastic Surgeons in 1978 and in 1979, the year of his retirement, he was elected president of the British Association for Surgery of the Hand. Predeceased by his wife, Marjorie, he leaves a daughter. [ANNE B SUTHERLAND]

## Francis Cameron Edington



*Former general practitioner Penrith, Cumbria (b 1904; q Edinburgh 1939), d 26 February 2004.*

Before studying medicine he farmed in northern Ontario, Canada. After qualifying and a short period working in the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, he joined the Royal Navy. He served, during the second world war, as a medical officer on various ships, destroyers in the north Atlantic convoys, and minelayers in the Arctic Circle, before joining the aircraft carrier *Shah* in the Far East as surgeon-lieutenant commander. He was mentioned in dispatches for saving the life of a drowning man in Liverpool docks. The *Shah* was involved in one of the last sea battles against the Japanese. After the war he joined his father and brother in general practice, where he stayed until his retirement in 1969. Predeceased by his wife, Anella, he leaves two sons and three grandchildren. [HUGH C BARR]

## Theodore David Fountain Money

*Former general practitioner Norwich (b Norwich 1907; q Cambridge/St Thomas's Hospital, London, 1932; MA), d 31 January 2004.*



David Money first entered general practice in Reedham, Norfolk. Following the loss of his first wife in childbirth he left for south eastern Nigeria, where he had been asked to start a leprosy settlement. After studying tropical medicine in Calcutta he returned to Nigeria for 10 years. In 1947 he came back to England, eventually joining a practice in Norwich. In 1958 he went half time in practice and worked half time for the Public Health Laboratory Service, developing the virology service for Norfolk. In retirement he taught himself Greek so as to be able to read the New Testament in the original. He revived services in Tibenham church. He leaves a wife, Margaret; twin daughters; and six grandchildren. [FRANCIS RUTTER]

## Christopher Richard Sheard

*Former general practitioner Ilkley, Yorkshire (b Airedale, Yorkshire, 1940; q Cambridge/London 1965; MA, DRCOG), died from a heart attack on 24 January 2004 while on holiday in Hawaii.*

Christopher Richard Sheard did GP locums all over the United Kingdom before settling in Wharfedale, Yorkshire, in 1969 and practising in Ilkley, where he was principal at Ilkley Health Centre for 32 years. He was also a clinical assistant in ophthalmology. In his retirement Chris and his wife, Sue, travelled to Antarctica, Alaska, Canada, and lastly to Hawaii. He leaves Sue and two children. [PETER SHEARD]

## John Ludlow Whitmore

*Former general practitioner Freshwater, Isle of Wight (b Reading 1921; q St Mary's Hospital, Paddington, 1946; MBE), died from bronchopneumonia on 30 January 2004.*

On qualifying he went to Singapore on national service, where he looked after service families and played tennis for the army. In 1950 he was sent to the British Army of the Rhine headquarters in Germany to look after service families. While there he designed the new army medical centre at Mönchengladbach. In 1953 he was posted to Australia, eventually leaving the army to become medical director of trials for the Atomic Energy Authority. In 1964 John entered general practice on the Isle of Wight. He leaves a wife; seven children; and 10 grandchildren. [MARGARET WHITMORE]